

Commission. Polacek's departure from the cabinet had been expected since he became chairman of the merged Trade Union of Metallurgical Workers. He is also a special Vice Chairman of the Trade Union Central Council.

The Assembly Presidium also abolished the State Commission for Economic and Scientific-Technical Cooperation because it has been duplicating the functions of the State Commission for Technology, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and the State Planning Commission in the area of international economic cooperation. Vice Premier Otakar Simunek, chairman of the defunct commission, will retain his post as chief delegate to COMECON. (*Rude Pravo*, January 12, 13, 24; Radio Prague, January 31.)

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Denouement

The sudden ending to Vladimir Kazan-Komarek's unusual (96-day) stopover in Czechoslovakia (see *East Europe*, January, pp. 34-35) was a very happy one for the Cambridge, Massachusetts, travel agent and his family—but not very enlightening to those still trying to discover the Novotny administration's motives for the episode. Police removed Komarek from a Soviet airliner last fall during an unscheduled stopover in Prague en route from Moscow.

The Czechoslovak-born American was sentenced February 1 by a Prague court to eight years in prison on charges of having organized the activities of an anti-state group from 1948 to 1950. He was expelled from Czechoslovakia two days later. Senator Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts reportedly interceded in Komarek's behalf with a letter to Novotny urging his release.

Safely back in his Boston suburb home, Komarek admitted having worked with French intelligence services after the war to help two persons escape from Czechoslovakia, but he denied having worked for the US Central Intelligence Agency and made no further admissions pending a trip to Washington. "In the eyes of Czechoslovak law, I was a spy, but I'd rather not elaborate on that," he told *The New York Times* Feb. 5.

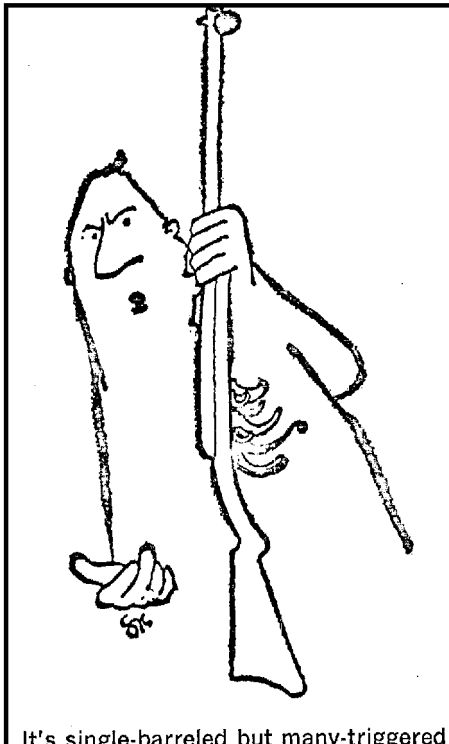
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East Europe
 March, 1967

Smidke, the Human Being

On January 20 President Novotny completed the rehabilitation of the late Karol Smidke, the postwar chairman of the Slovak National Council who fell from grace in the stalinist purge of 1949. Novotny awarded the insignia of "Hero of the CSSR" in memoriam to Smidke's widow and two sons along with a citation for "his important part in organizing the 1944 Slovak National Uprising" against the Nazis. Local officials placed a wreath on Smidke's grave in Brno the same day. The rehabilitated hero died in 1952; after being demoted he was assigned as manager of the Tesla enterprise in Bratislava, where he worked until his death.

"Yes, [Smidke] was a human being," wrote Alexander Dubcek, first secretary of the Slovak party CC, in a *Pravda* eulogy. "Everyone who got to know him personally would be hard put to find another term to characterize his personality. . . ." Smidke and former Foreign Minister Vladimir Clementis were among the leading Slovak personalities who were purged as "bourgeois nationalists."



Polityka (Warsaw), January 7, 1967

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but who have been rehabilitated in the last two years. (*Pravda* [Bratislava], January 20, 22; *Kulturni Zivot* [Bratislava], January 20.)

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Editorial Carousel

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The merry-go-round at *Literarni Noviny* continued into the new year with the fifth change in management since the fall of 1965 (see *East Europe*, January, p. 34). Three members were added to the editorial board: Juraj Spitzer, also editor-in-chief of the Slovak Writers Union weekly *Kulturny Zivot* since February, 1965; Milan Jungmann; and Frantisek Vbra. Jungmann, demoted from the leading position on the editorial board last year to that of editor responsible to the board, is now restored to full membership. Jiri Sotola continues as chairman of the board (*Literarni Noviny*, January 7.)

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Evil Spirits

Reporting on crime in the past year, Dr. Jan Bartuska, Czechoslovak Procurator-General, told the press that every third murder in the country is committed under the influence of alcohol and blamed "80 percent of the rowdiness, more than 50 percent of maliciously inflicted injuries and 40 percent of the thefts in the past years" on the evil spirits. He attributed a third of the nation's crimes to young people between 15 and 25.

Dr. Bartuska said last year's overall crime rate was about what it was the year before, though there was an increase in "acts against the public order, citizens' health and property and other rights and lawful interests of individuals." Highway and railroad traffic offenses comprised a quarter of the crimes in 1966, and pilfering, misuse or destruction of "socialist property" amounted to one-fifth. (*Rude Pravo, Mlada Fronta*, January 28.)

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A Quiet Innovation

The new Institute for the Research of Public Opinion announced last year finally opened its doors in Prague on January 1. The institute's main tasks will be "first to create

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